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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

11 July 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. WISNER

SUBJECT: Reasons for Conducting OPC Albanian
Operation on Joint Basis with British.

1. The OPC Albanian operation is being conducted on a joint basis with the appropriate agency of the British Government. The decision to enter into this joint arrangement with the British was prompted by policy considerations, and by actual circumstances which developed as OPC began to enter into the active phases of the operation.

2. So far as policy is concerned, it was the conclusion of the planners of the Albanian operation that the instruments available to the United States for the execution of its policy in Albania are not by themselves sufficient for complete implementation of the desired U.S. policy and that therefore the full cooperation of the British Government must be sought and obtained. This conclusion was supported by the Department of State in the basic policy paper covering this operation, in which it is stated that "The British Government should be approached, informally at first, with a view to ascertaining British thinking in regard to Albania and reaching an early agreement on over-all policy and program. Provision should be made for close cooperation with respect to subsequent action." In addition, early discussions with responsible officials of the National Military Establishment brought out their concern that the British be enjoined from utilizing the present situation in Albania for the aggrandizement of British influence in the Balkans, Italy and the Eastern Mediterranean to the detriment of U.S. interests in that area and the general cause of halting Soviet expansion.

3. With these policy considerations in mind OPC early discovered not only that the British were engaged in a vigorous effort to recoup their prestige in Greece but were actually also in the early stages of an Albanian operation, which we still suspect was primarily designed to bolster their position in Greece. OPC accordingly decided to invite the British to enter into a joint operation in Albania for the following reasons:

a. It was clear that the British were prepared to proceed with their operation in any event, with or without our sanction, and whether jointly or separately. The confusion which separate

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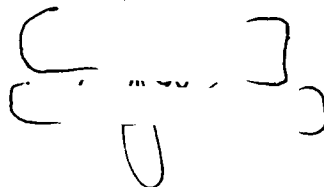
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British and American operations in Albania would create among the Albanian exiles would have most unfortunate security repercussions, and inevitably result in a contest between ourselves and the British for control of Albanian personnel and geographical areas inside Albania which might well jeopardize the success of the entire operation, since Albania is not large enough to effectively contain the struggles of two major powers for control of its people and territory.

b. It was discovered that the contemplated British operation was one in which the identity of British support was not hidden and in which they therefore sought to openly advance British influence by the operation. In addition, it was clear that the British were in a more advanced phase of their operation than OPC. It was therefore felt that by entering into a joint operation it would be possible to eliminate the strictly British influence aspects of the operation, which has proved true, and to ensure that the British not forge so far ahead operationally as to reap undeserved benefits from the operation.

c. It was clearly recognized that, notwithstanding what arrangements might be entered into, there would still be an inevitable amount of jockeying for position between the British and ourselves vis-a-vis Albania and the implications of its eventual liberation. OPC felt very strongly that the best means of assuring the outcome of any such conflicts would be to restrict them to an area where they would not be visible either to the Albanians or the Soviet masters of Albania, and in such a way that operations in Albania would not be complicated by unnecessary efforts to ascertain the nature and extent of British activities. It was clear that mere liaison arrangements would not suffice for this purpose and that only our concept of a joint operation, that is, one in which our dominant interest was gradually asserted, would provide an adequate means of achieving these ends.

d. It was obvious in the absence of American controlled territory in the Mediterranean area that we should be forced to rely at some juncture, in view of the political complications in connection with the Greeks and Italians vis-a-vis Albanian affairs, upon British territories in that area.



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